

剣刻の銀乙女

ユングフラウ



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一迅社文庫

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Kenkoku no Jungfrau - Volume 01 Chapter 00-02 (Incomplete)

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Novel Illustrations





Prologue

Prologue[edit]

On the dark night road, a lone boy, Heath, walked while looking up at the sky.

The moon was out. Cloudless, while drawing a true circle, it was a harvest moon without any complaints. In the moonlight which seemed to be gnawing, even the appearance of the surrounding stars darkened as if they were concealing themselves. Thanks to that, it was easy to walk even on a road devastated by gravel. In this area, there were only a few private houses.

Even though it was the king's capital, outside the outer wall, there was scenery no different from a rural area. If one would turn to the opposite side, a vast forest could be seen spreading along the road. The main road spread out as if just to separate the forest and the residential area.

"I'm totally late..."

The time had already passed midnight. It wasn't the proper time for a boy who was still in his teens to be roaming around the main road. However, it was reasonable if one would consider the boy's standpoint.

There was a big wrapping held in Heath's arm. Though the contents were as cheap as sashimi with skin still attached, it was still armour. A long spear was held in the other arm. Even though it appeared that way, this was still following one's duties as a soldier.

"I probably shouldn't have undertaken tomorrow's duties."

Heath put himself to work even though he was originally off-duty that morning. If he hadn't felt that the previous day seemed very slow, he wouldn't have taken the job...

Leaking a small sigh, Heath walked on alone.

Three months had passed since that event occurred...

Three months before; at the place of a certain ceremony, a knight, on top of that a knight leader, was killed and the riot occurred.

Though Heath was not present there, since the senior pupils and acquaintances were involved, it wasn't someone else's problem. It was caused in the king's presence and the incident hence still caused unrest amongst the citizens even now.

Presumably due to such confusion, the number of dangerous events occurring had increased.

Even today, there seemed to be some kind of uproar on the main street. The substitute did not show up even after the shift ended, and it was not possible to part from the possession intestines until he came.

—I wonder if Mana went to sleep already...

Thinking of his sister who remained at home, he paced up his speed.

“What...was that...?” While looking up at the moon aimlessly, Heath saw a strange shadow pass by.

It possessed wings like a bat and a long tail like that of a snake. If it was a bird that would fly in the middle of the night, then it should have been like an owl but the figure of the shadow seemed to vary a bit from a bird.

One's eyesight usually darkened in the moonlight, the sense of distance was also not able to be grasped properly, but Heath was able to perceive a rough figure of the shadow.

—Saika...!!

Saika was the general term used for monsters which attacked humans. Amongst them, it was said that there were ones with wings too. Not a bird, but being able to flutter about in the sky. If one thought of such a thing, then the only thing that came to mind was a saika.

—I have to notify the Knight's Order—

If you saw something that looked like a saika, then notifying a Knight - that was common sense that even children knew of.

Luckily, it seemed that the shadow didn't notice Heath. He started to descend to the forest immediately like that.

If it was from there, then rather than the Knights of the Royal Palace, the

barracks where Heath worked at was nearer. While retracing his footsteps, Heath suddenly noticed.

“A person...?”

Intertwined with the tail of the flying shadow, another silver coloured profile could be seen. And then, there were also limbs that expanded loosely from there.

—Was he captured...?

Though the retreating Heath held on to the armour, the only thing that could be used as a weapon was the spear that he shouldered.

To make matters worse, if the one who was caught on its tail was a person, then the current shadow was somewhat like a small building. He should go call for help immediately, and bring as many powerful knights and soldiers as possible.

—That’s no good; I’ll lose sight of it!

A moment of hesitation, nevertheless, he still wavered for an instant.

Heath let go of the wrapped armour and started dashing while grasping only a spear, towards the forest where the shadow disappeared. Fifteen minutes had passed since he had stepped into the forest, and he let out a light groan.

—I can’t see anything...

The moonlight was being blocked by the branches of the surrounding trees. Even the ground could not be seen clearly. He walked carefully and advanced so as not to stumble on the root of a tree, but he had already lost sight of the area where the shadow descended.

—Calm down. That thing should have been large.

The surrounding trees had become overcrowded too. If that giant creature which was as big as a small building moved, it was likely to break some branches or step on some dry grass. It was impossible for it to not make any sound.

After clearing his ears and checking out the surroundings, he heard a large sound of water being splashed reverberating from the distance.

—Water...That's it, a lake!

There should be a lake deeper inside the forest. It was said that a fairy dwelled in the lake connected to the Knights Of The Round Table which existed in the folklore.

He fastened his pace and advanced towards the direction which the sound came from. But while approaching nearer, an unpleasant sweat of perspiration ran along his forehead. His breathing also grew heavier and he couldn't help but close his mouth. His heartbeat seemed like an alarm bell that could be heard in the surroundings.

—The monster from before, it's just beyond here...

What could he do now, after he threw away his armour? The possibility of the person who was captured being alive at the point of being captured might be very low. It could be that all he was doing was increasing the number of monster-feed by one.

But still, Heath did not retreat.

—If it was master, he would have never stepped back at a time like this.

While tightly gripping his spear, he started building up his courage.

Heath had a mentor who taught him how to handle a spear. Precisely because that technique was accepted, the 16 year old him was also accepted as a soldier. His mentor was an eccentric character, but he was not a man who would desert a dying human without trying to the best of his abilities to save him.

And exactly because he thought of that master as a protagonist from an epic tale, he took up apprenticeship and desperately piled up his training.

And advancing like that, the forest suddenly cleared up.

—A lake.

While feeling relieved after seeing light in the darkness, he also stiffened his body at the same time. The real danger starts from there. Surveying the surroundings while killing his breathing—

Splash Silver-coloured water droplets danced in mid-air.

There was a lone girl there.

Amidst the drops of water and moonlight, argent hair shook his iris like a miracle and he reeled it in.

The reason that the droplets looked silver was because of her hair, that's what he indistinctly thought.

When she shook off the drops from her hair; thin, beautiful fingers could be seen, which she submerged into the lake's surface. After drawing up water in the palm of both hands to her tender lips, the overflowing water went along from her chin to her neck.

The girl who enriched her throat leaked a sigh that seemed to be satisfactory and watched the surface of the lake. There might have been some water striders. A ripple appeared and then disappeared, shaking the full moon's reflection on the lake's surface.

The girl was leaning on a small islet which was thrusting out from the lake.

And the pupils of the girl who was watching the lake were deep crimson in colour. Did she wash her face? Droplets of water were glittering on the long eyelashes covering her eyes.

—A fairy...?

The girl was beautiful enough for him to forget about what he came here to do.

Her clothes boldly exposed her shoulders. But rather than saying it looked mysterious, it would be more proper to say that it looked fairy-tale-like. On top of her lap, a richly coloured hat was placed.

While feeling fascinated, *snap* Heath accidentally stepped on a branch under his feet.

“Who’s there!?”

Even though it was a sharp, challenging voice, it had a sound echo like a falling bell.

“Ah, err, I am, well...?”

While answering in a confused tone, the girl's presence in front of him was distancing fast.

"E-Eh...?"

He suddenly noticed that his body was floating in mid-air. But then his ascent stopped with a jerk.

There seemed to be a big shadow extending on the surface of the water. And it seemed that the thing which was struggling and wriggling at the end of the apex was his own shadow. Heath realised that he was lifted up by something gigantic.

—I shouldn't turn around I shouldn't turn around I shouldn't turn around!

Even though he understood that, Heath turned his head around while shivering.

A bright red pupil similar to the girl's shook there.

The only precise difference would be that, those eyes were as big as the girl's whole head. And the head those eyes were installed in were furthermore, bigger. A helmet such as a man's head would be crushed instantly in that mouth, where gigantic fangs were closely packed.

That wasn't a saika. It was a far more fearsome being...!

His face became pale.

The thing that stood there was a real dragon.

It had scales of beautiful black colour, as if dissolving into the darkness of the night.

The difference between a saika and a dragon was extremely simple.

Only that, the difference in their powers was on a hopeless level.

A saika could be slashed with an edged blade and even magic was effective against it. A person with enough strength could even fight it one-on-one.

In case of a dragon though, nothing could reach it without exception. Even the scales of a very young dragon could not be wounded with a sword forged from iron, and magic would become powerless and disappear before reaching it. There was only one sole thing that could reach, a sword that carried magic. And

that might only range in the magics used by the <Knights of the Round Table>, which were called one of the secrets of magic. It was an existence which could possibly only be confronted by a person who had mastered both the sword and magic thoroughly.

Heath finally remembered that he had entered the forest when he was chasing after a monster.

While shaking, Heath put his gaze back on the girl. She, rather than being afraid, was glaring at Heath with her arms crossed as if she was pouting.

The silver girl and a black dragon—and then, that was a forest where fairies were said to live. Heath started to think that he lost himself in an illusion of a scene from a play.

The dragon, as if it were a pet presenting the prey to its master, lifted Heath up in front of the girl. With a splash, a sheet of water stood. Heath felt as if the height changed.

The girl then questioned him with a voice filled with vigilance.

“Who are you? What are you doing here?”

Heath, with a stiff face shouted “I came to save you.”

Being held in the jaws of a dragon, with his legs shaking to and fro in mid-air, and tears, about to overflow at any time, collected in his eyes. His voice was turning inside-out too. The only thing worth praising was that, even till the last moment, he did not release the spear from his hands.

No matter how you saw it, the line he should have been uttering was not, “I came to save you,” but rather, “Please save me.”

Despite all of that, seeing the Heath who bravely stated such a thing, the girl opened her mouth with a vacant expression. The previous sharp facial expression looked surprised enough to be called innocent. After that, as if she were desperately enduring her urges to laugh out, her mouth kept trembling all over. And yet, after smoothing over her voice in that kind of state, she asked another question.

“Save me? From what?”

Heath, while he was still shaking, straightened his back.

"Probably...from him."

Dragon, monster, saika—whichever representation he used, it might have offended the dragon or the girl. Heath hesitantly answered thinking of that while still trembling.

The girl squatted down and remained in that position while putting her face on both palms. The dragon also lowered Heath to a position in which he could touch the surface of the lake.

The girl faced Heath with deep scarlet upturned eyes, and whispered with a teasing tone as if pleading for some sweets,

"I want to be saved~ How are you going to save me?" "We-Well, how about, using the dragon's blind spot, I'll grab your hand and escape...like that?"

Hearing an answer like that, the girl finally burst into laughter magnificently and started rolling on top of the small islet.

Well, it couldn't really be helped, could it? While talking about finding the dragon's blind spot but splendidly getting captured, it wasn't a matter of rescuing someone or not, since the dragon was completely the girl's companion. Even Heath himself couldn't help but laugh.

After laughing for a while, the girl let out a long breath as if she had enjoyed herself fully and stood up before long.

"Ahaha, that was funny. You're not too bad, are you? Actually making me laugh this much."

"You're welcome..."

The girl who was wiping her tears seemed to have laughed enough to make more tears fall while wiping. She said in a tone as if she was troubled,

"About rescuing me, I see...when I was riding the dragon <Teifue>, I was seen by you. I really made a blunder."

—What a failure

By 'Teifue', she probably meant the dragon.

Learning that she was troubled after being seen, Heath felt a cold chill run down his back.

“Umm, dragon, will I die?”

He didn't understand the relationship between the dragon and the girl, but in this situation, he wasn't able to think of any other fate that could befall him.

As if considering what to do with the trembling Heath, the girl brought her index finger up to her lips. “Hmm, what should I do...? It doesn't look like you have any evil intentions... Rather, for making me laugh this much, I can't do without giving you some kind of reward, can I?”

—Reward...?

In that situation, without even thinking why the girl said such a thing, Heath inclined his neck.

The girl was fixedly inquiring about Heath's state, but before long she flashed a gentle smile.

“I think it should be okay to overlook you.”

The lamp of hope returned to Heath's pupils after the possibility of living had been shown to him.

“But, you will have to follow what I am about to tell you.”

“I'll follow—I'll listen to anything!”

“You didn't meet me here, and you didn't see any flying dragons either.”

“Yes! I didn't see, nor hear any dragons.”

“That's strange. Then, doesn't that mean that there wasn't any promise to keep in the first place?”

“E-eh? Well, that's...erm...”

When Heath kept going in circles in front of her eyes, the girl again started laughing while embracing her stomach.

“Ahaha, you really are very amusing.”

After saying that, the girl looked up at the dragon and had it jerk its jaws.

"It's alright now."

After the girl muttered that, the dragon suddenly released Heath.

With a loud splash, Heath fell down into the lake while splashing up a grand spray of water. The depth of the lake wasn't much, so he hit his face with the bottom of the lake. Bringing his head up after struggling for some time, the dragon's figure had disappeared before he was even aware of it.

On the other hand, the girl was looking down at Heath with the same crimson eyes as the dragon. The girl quietly placed her foot on the water while smiling.

"Eh~?"

After seeing those pure white legs treading on top of the water's surface rather than sinking, Heath leaked out an idiotic voice.

When she shook her argent hair, the girl interrupted greatly.

"My name is Estelle Norn Schutern. A clown."

"A clown...?"

Now that he thought about it, certainly the girl's mysterious clothing didn't look anything but that of a clown's.

"To be able to make a clown laugh, I'll at least spare your life~"

And then, pointing at Heath with a snap,

"But, if you tell someone about me, next time I really will eat you, okay?"



After giving a bright nod, Heath nervously said in an inquiring voice,

“Err, one thing, is it okay for me to ask about one thing?”

“What is it?”

“That dragon just now, what in the world was that? Was it magic? Surely it wasn't a real dragon, right?”

The girl's pupils were not of a light purple colour. Thus, she surely couldn't be one of the Tenkoku Tsukai <Omen Talker>.

To the Heath who revealed a voice filled with bewilderment, she narrowed her scarlet-coloured eyes.

“Clown's antics you see, that was just a simple magic trick.”

Apparently, even the miracle of her standing on top of water was about to be written off as a simple magic trick. The girl seemed to be happily fluttering the palms of her hands.

“See you then, bye bye.”

After leaving those last words, her body began to disappear as if dissolving into the night wind.

“Ah, Wait!”

By the time Heath shouted that, the girl's figure was nowhere to be seen.

—She disappeared...?

The black dragon, and the silver-haired girl too disappeared as if they weren't there from the beginning. Even saying that he saw a strange dream would have a lot of persuasive power.

Only the silver moon alone did not change. It seemed to be floating in the sky and nodding as if saying that it was not a dream.

For a while, after staring off blankly in a daze, and shivering in the cold, Heath crawled up from the lake to ashore.

That was in fact, Heath and her—Estelle's—first meeting.

Chapter 1 - The Star Falls, The Clown Laughs

Chapter 1 - The Star Falls, The Clown Laughs[\[edit\]](#)

Part 1[\[edit\]](#)

“It is like so in the legends.”

Under that dazzling sunlight, and on the spacious stage, a dignified singing voice resounded.

And then, following the song, many music strings started to play in a refreshing tone. They were harps.

“It was the times of antiquity. Many kings, many countries, and many faiths were mixed together, and then they conflicted, an age where nothing was controlled and finally, an existence known as a demon revealed itself in this world.”

That place was an arena which had been built on a grand scale.

In the central area, there was a stone stage that had been cut in a square shape and in its surroundings, a maintained area was planted. The low wall had been wonderfully decorated with candlesticks, and small flags were stabbed below that. Even from a distant view it could be realised from their varied designs that there were 12 kinds of flags in total.

Beyond the stage that was enclosed by a low wall a circular auditorium had been prepared. The seats had already been filled so much that the aisle could not be seen but everyone had been listening attentively without opening their mouths.

“Then the many kings went to battle for diverse reasons, a certain king lost his territory and nation to the demon. For a certain king, it was to acquire the territory trampled by the demon. Again, for a certain king it was just to gain more prestige with bravery and valour.”

To be able to make one’s voice echo here, an extraordinary speaking volume

and technique should be necessary. However, the girl's singing voice could not pile up that impossible amount of vibration. The one singing while playing the harp was a girl with light purple eyes.

There was a thin ring fixed on the finger that was playing the bowstrings. There was also a bracelet of the same design on her arm. Anyone who was familiar with magic should be able to tell that the design curved there represented an <Omen>, which had properties of power.

"And thus, the many kingdoms began to decrease. Even possessing any kind of sword, or casting any kind of magic, or using any kind of knowledge, could not harm the body of the demon, the legend begins from here."

Her raven hair was tied in a bundled by the back of her head where it extended to her waist forming a long ponytail, her closed eyes looked long and narrow, and her flower bud like lips were soaked in a beautiful pink colour.

The clothes that she wore were not a dress but a uniform that a schoolgirl usually wears. Compared to a dress it had fewer decorations but her long and slender legs which were covered by tights helped her undulated rich body figure. As a woman, her glamour was definitely not at a disadvantage.

Though it was a fine weather, for her to be able to wear such lightweight clothing in a season where the snow had yet to melt, was all thanks to the magic flames that warmed that place up.

"From a number of countries which could not possibly be counted, soon only 12 remained. There was a king who advanced to defeat the demon too. There was a king who thought his own power was more than enough to defeat it too. There was a king who from the fear of the demon concealed himself in his territory too. It was at that time, a single sage was said to cut down one of the demon's arms."

The girl was singing about a heroic tale from the time of antiquity. It wasn't old enough to be called a myth, but it wasn't from a near enough past to leave behind remnants in literature. But, it is a very familiar tale for the people who live there. It was a splendid singing voice; none of spectators opened their mouths and listened attentively to the song.

"There is a sword that could kill the demon. I want a person who has excellent

techniques. Isn't there anyone who would come with me? There were 12 people. The 12 kings sent one of the most excellent knights from each of their kingdoms."

Other than the audience seats, on the other side of the outer wall, the spire of a watchtower ascended.

The number of spires surrounding the arena, and the decorative flags hanging on the outer wall, were of 12 of each of them in total. To this country, the number 12 represented holiness/dignity.

"The 12 knights and the single Sage confronted the demon, and then splendidly defeated it. —And like that, making the sage their king, the 12 kingdoms became one. The 12 knights were referred as The Knights of the Round Table and became the model of all knights and so time has reached the present."

After finishing singing for a while; the girl let out a breath feeling relieved.

While a grand applause was being sent, the girl saw a single face move back. It was when she was leaving the stage. Raising her face, the girl fixed her sight on that spot.

A Clown...?

Following the knights, the soldiers were forming a line; it was the front row seats of the auditorium. On the next row of seats, there were mercenaries with robust physiques but there was a girl with a Clowns clothing there.

She had long silver coloured hair and vivid crimson pupils with a strikingly good body figure, she should've attracted a lot of attention.

The general visitors were seated on a further row so she was curious about how the girl slipped in with the soldiers but she couldn't stand still there for too long. She quietly got down from the stage.

On both sides of the stage, several knights were standing in a row. After she joined the East side, she heard a sociable voice calling out next to her.

"Did you see something that caught your interest, Lutile"

The girl, Lutile's name was called by a youth who had a fearless physique and face. He had long blonde hair tied behind his back, and was wearing a frock coat.

It was a little bit exaggerated thing to wear at the place of a ceremony.

After being asked, the girl searched for the clown's appearance again but was not able to find it.

"The time has reached the present— was it? That was quite a good show you know."

The last phrase was a part the girl added specifically for this ceremony. It wasn't in the original song.

"We are still in the middle of the ceremony, Gillette Onii-sama."

Even though she had deliberately lowered her voice, she accidentally called him by his old nickname. When she realised this, her face became red. At this the youth made a nostalgic gentle face and shrugged his shoulders.

The young man was Lutile's older male cousin. She used to play with the young man a lot in her childhood and in those times, reciprocally not by Knight or anything else; he used to be called "Onii-sama" innocently while smiling.

Following the girls verse, two knights got up on the stage, their respective swords were mutually pulled out and the tips were piled up on each other exchanging an expression of gratitude. After that, they mutually put some distance between each other and started to exchange blows with their swords.

But even though they were on an arena, it was unlikely that they would actually cut each other in an exhibition. It was the sword dance of courtesy.

(Well, let us not speak so stiffly. And if you really think so, then please put on a more interesting expression.) (I had this face since the moment I was born.)

After Lutile answered like that, the young man again shrugged his shoulders in a comical manner.

(Even now and in the past, even though you could still make a more adorable expression... still an ill-humoured person aren't you?) (...I was made to recite a verse I was not good at in a place like this. It doesn't feel pleasant.)

(Don't be so hard-hearted. It was really a beautiful singing voice.)

After happily saying that, the young man this time continued with an earnest voice,

(Lutile, you are magnificent. Amongst us 12, you are the youngest, the most beautiful and you are strong too. Everyone pays attention to you. Responding to that attention is also an obligation of a person who is considered a knight.)



(Even though I received the title of a knight, I am still part of the student body. I would prefer if you didn't flatter me.) (Hahaha, the 'Dragon Slaying' <Knight Princess> says some laudable things.)

(...That was, not only because of my own abilities.)

About 1 year ago, the girl and a few of her fellow students encountered a Dragon, she defeated it. It was a young Dragon but a Dragon nonetheless. At minimum, there would have to be at least 3 knights, Tenkoku Tsukai <Omen Talker> in order to defeat it. It was said that at least one small unit was necessary to deal with the monster.

That day, the 16 year old Lutile was able bring it down by herself. There were other students too but that was a situation where one's leg was supposed to give in and it was not even possible to escape either.

With an achievement like that, she was able to acquire the title of a Knight without even graduating, and at the same time along with a hilarious embellishment, she was given exaggerated nicknames like <Knight Princess> etc.

Hesitating to say that out loud, the young man started laughing with a

“Hahaha.”

(Please don't make such a trouble face, You and that Dragon too, were selected by the ^{Entaku no Kenkoku} *<Engraved Blade of the Round Table>* together. We will become the next legend. Therefore, like a blooming flower, please sympathise with the hearts the ones who would spring out ahead. On the right hand that the young man had quietly shown, there was a crest which was carved imitating a sword. The same thing existed on the girl's left hand.

(<Kenkoku>...is it?)

While Lutile was looking at her own <Kenkoku>, the young man nodded emotively.

(Was it strange? That you yourself were chosen?)

(That is, well...But, the more incomprehensible thing is)

(That is to say, why “now”?)

To the young man who interrupted her sentence, Lulite nodded.

<Engraved Blade of the Round Table>——In the past, the swords of the 12 who entombed the Demon perished along with the demon. It is said that the sage turned them into at that time and stopped the destruction, for the day when the one to succeed the demon would appear. One thing or another, it was an incident that happened one thousand years ago. The legend stopped there, and in the history thereafter, the name of <Kenkoku> did not appear.

And as for why it appeared now of all times:

“Should I say that the “Saika” are starting something?”

When Lutile brought up that name, the young man nodded with hard conviction.

Saika is the generic name of the race that is said to possess the demon's blood. They are the children the demon left behind, and are also a calamity by the demon that ruins and abhors the human race.

There are ones with the claws and the fangs like a beast, and there are also ones with wings like a bat. There are ones with strong and firm scaled skin. It is also said that there are ones capable of making flames and thunder fall.

Amongst them, the Saika that should one be most cautious of is the class called “Ouka”. Skilfully dressed in an appearance that appears a human, they used magic and weapons unknown to human. In a case witnessed in the past, an entire knight squad at that time was driven to a state of annihilation against just one Ouka.

It is plausible that the number of those individuals isn't much; they are able to cross the great valley by themselves.

Including the Oukas, there are various kinds of Saika out there with various appearances. It is said that they live in the opposite side of the great valley which cuts across the continent and is said to be the mark of the battle between the demon and the Knights of the Round Table. The Saikas invade into the human countries by jumping over the valley.

Especially in the last few months, it felt as if the number of ferocious natured Saikas had grown.

(To overturn the situation of the war. There's no way that could be possible, I guess.)

After the life of people got more plentiful, the confrontation with the Saika had intensified.

The humans also built bridges and repeatedly counter attacked, but as expected, humans were inferior to the Saika in terms of power individually. The unfavourable situation in the war continued but, in the history of the past one thousand years, there were also times when the situation was far more inferior. In fact, it could be said that the present an age where the difference wasn't so vast and was even rivalled.

In such a time, Entaku no Kenkoku <Engraved Blade of the Round Table> suddenly appeared.

Without any prior notice, Lutile and the young man were chosen, dwelling in the body of 12 knights. Moreover, Lutile also felt much bewilderment at first. Even now, she couldn't fully remove her doubts but....

The young man was also looking at his <Kenkoku> doubtfully.

(I don't really feel like I was given some kind of special power. I see, It might be that this <Kenkoku> expects us to do something.) While the young man faintly

muttered that, a large shadow was suddenly cast overhead of the two.

(Watch your mouths, both of you.)

(Commander Greisch)

Lutile and the young man quickly fixed their postures.

He was the man who worked as the first division commander of the Estrelia Knight's Order the young man belonged to. From a third seat position, the commander became a person who would be in charge of the military other than the king. It was when the salutations were over and returned.

Though he was reproved; the young man still stated the question to the commander while lowering his voice.

(Has the commander learned something regarding these <Kenkoku>?)

- *Fumu* The man ringed his neck towards the young man with a broken expression.

(Even I still have not heard of anything, but I have something on my mind.)

(Which is?)

(It would have also been in the verse by Lutile a moment ago. As it was said in the legends, its an object in order to oppose the demon.) (In other words, someone who will succeed the demon has appeared?)

(I would not call it an affirmation though. However, the ones who are gathered here are all strong warriors who would feel ashamed at the name of the strongest. Therefore it was appropriate to think that it was in order to fight, and in addition to that, to fight the decisive battle against an enemy where a <Kenkoku> was necessary.) (The demon...) When Lutile embraced her elbows as if she were trembling, the man laughed vigorously.

(Hahaha. Was the "Knight Princess" also a maiden too?)

(I-It's not like I was hesitating or anything...)

(No, don't mind it. Even if you stand ready, you will receive a proper explanation from the king.)

This stage had become the location for the succession rite of the Entaku no Kenkoku

<Engraved Blade of the Round Table>. Though there were opinions that it should have been performed at the royal castle in order to show respect to the king, the king himself wanted to give lengthily explanation it to the subjects too. That's how the stage came to be in a place like this. Perhaps, it was meant to wipe out the recent distrusts, too.

The king, huh...

The present king is considerably young because the late king didn't have any siblings, and he died at a young age in his forties. Though five years had gradually passed since he ascended the throne, as expected, an insufficiency in power could still be felt compared to the late king. It was necessary to peacefully subdue the ingenuity of various feudal lords, though a noteworthy degeneration of the public order was not perceived.

Because the person in question was also concerned about it, recently he was showing himself in front of the public too.

In regards of such a king, rather than feeling discontent, Lutile's feeling of sympathy was stronger. -Uncle... The current king was Lutile's uncle. Ever since he took up the throne, their chances to meet had decreased. In place of her father who died at an early age, he looked after Lutile, and like a real parent and child too.

While Lutile was dealing with her feelings, a steering voice resounded.

“-----His majesty comes.”

At someone's word, the place fell silent.

And then, everyone promptly took a respectful bow.

The king had stepped on the stage where Lutile was singing till just a while ago.

Is seems his anxiety was very bad, he had become very skinny and his complexion was poor too.

“Hear me, my people! Our country has been continuously exposed to the threat of the Saika for many months and years now.”

When Lutile looked over at the king who was speaking to the people, she knit her brows. Behind the king, there was a strange silhouette.

“Gillette-san, who in the world is that?”

The silhouette was wearing a mask where a smiling facial expression was floating. He was wearing baggy attire, so his constitutions could not be grasped.

He seemed to be a man but he could not be definitely differentiated by sex.

“He is the clown of the imperial court isn’t he?”

“A clown in such a seat?”

When Lutile leaked a dubious voice, the young man went “Ah!” as if he remembered something.

“That’s right; you are normally a student aren’t you?”

Lutile was still a student though the other knights were working for the royal palace or castles in other territories, but Lutile was still a student. In addition to having the title of a knight, if one does not have any excellent records, even his shadow cannot enter the royal palace unless he is called for. He was not even informed about the internal circumstances.

“He is the new clown who was invited about three months ago in order to make the king lively. The king too, was pleased beyond expectations. So he dismissed the previous court clown and employed this one. Thanks to that, he became healthy enough to be able to show himself in public, but now he takes him along wherever he goes.”

“Is that so...”

The previous court clown was quite a fat but pleasant middle aged man. He had an indescribable charm in his plainness though in a good meaning...

“The sage of the sword had left behind a power for us to defeat the demon
that might appear one day. As a remainder of the sages end, the Entaku no Kenkoku Engraved Blade of the Round Table have appeared; which have released the powers of the ancients.”

After dropping his shoulders with a lamented manner, the king had gotten down to the main question.

Both Lutile and the young man put their attention there.

"The Engraved Blade of the Round Table has three rules."

"...?"

Rather than saying what had to be done, it was the explanation of the 'Rules'. Starting with the girl, all of the knights and the guests of honour gathered there showed an expression filled with bewilderment.

"Firstly, the Engraved Blade of the Round Table has each been given a power that has been told in their respective legends."

After hearing what the king had said, the young man showed a smile and whispered to Lutile,

"A demon-slaying sword huh? That sure sounds reassuring."

It is said in the legends that, the swords given by the sage had the power to manipulate flames and snow, and that it far surpassed the current <Omen>.

---My Engraved Blade also has a power like that?

While Lutile was fixedly looking at her Engraved Blade, the king began to explain the next rule.

"Secondly, The Engraved Blade of the Round Table can be transferred to another possessor. But, it cannot be restored to a person who has already once let it go."

"Transfer...?"

Transfer, as in submitting ones article to someone else.

---It's possible for one person to possess several Engraved Blade at once...?

While she was pondering about it, the king continued.

"Furthermore, in case of a possessor's death, the one who has seen his last moments will inherit the Engraved Blade."

" ?"

An uncomfortable feeling was felt.

That last sentence sounded like a very repulsive one.

"Thirdly, the <Seal of the Sage> which can grant any wish will be given to the

one who will gather all the Engraved Blade of the Round Table.”

「Kuhihī」 After saying that, the king raised a strange laughing voice.

“What in the world is he talking about...?”

In front of the dubious Lutile, the young man tensed his body.

Seeing his hands gripping the handle of his sword, Lutile was taken aback.

“I just felt something abnormal, be on guard.”

“Yes.”

Lutile also undid the latch of her sword that hanged from her waist.

The commander might have felt a similarly abnormal feeling. He was walking towards the king.

“With all due respect, my king. What are we supposed to do with these ^{Entaku no Kenko} Engraved Blade of the Round Table?” The king tilted his shoulders at the words of the commander

“Do you really not understand?”

“Though it is shameful, the incompetent I could not understand it.”

It happened while the commander was hanging his head.

The Clown’s figure started to float lightly.

It was supposed to be a bizarre scene. But even so, no one present at that place was able to stop it.

- Gronn* something dropped on the ground.

“Eh...?”

No one knew who leaked that voice. Including the king, as if no one could grasp what had just occurred in front of their eyes, they started blinking randomly. The withered voice just now had sounded like a ghost’s whose eyes had just spilled over.

In front of the dumbfounded Lutile, a red fountain gushed out.

The thing that fell on the ground was the commander’s head.

"Hehyaa...?"

Soaked in the blood that had spurted out from the head, the king leaked a miserable voice and fell to his back. With that as a trigger, a high-pitched scream could be heard from the audience seats.

At the same time, all of the knights started to move.

"LUTILE!"

"Come forth, My knights!"

At the same time the young man started, Lutile also started to shift.

At Lutile's voice, the empty space in front started to waver like a water surface.

It was a sword with a very sharp blade. As if responding to the sword that had appeared from empty space, Lutile's ring and bracelet started to shine in a light-purple radiance. It was the magic of the <Omen>.

The many swords floating together, all simultaneously flew through the space between.

The sword pierced through the Clowns limbs and bound him in air.

With that small delay, the other knights also thrust their swords before the clown's neck.

Bound up by the swords pierced in his body, adding the many swords thrust before him, the clown couldn't even lift a finger.

"Tha-that was not what you promised, Clown!! Why did you kill Greisch!"

The clown leaked a mysterious voice towards the king who was screaming.

"Ku,Kukukukukku..."

The clown was laughing.

"__?"

It was a bizarre voice. The instant that strangely muffled laughing voice that sounded like clothes where being ripped was heard, it felt as if it was violently jolting one's head.

That moment, did not even spare the time to enclose one's thoughts.

"Witness This! It is the Engraved ^{Entaku no} ~~Blade of the~~ Round Table!"

A ^{Entaku no} ~~Engraved~~ Blade of the Round Table was engraved on the arm that the clown had just thrust out, the same as Lutile's and the young man's. Seeing that, Lutile felt as if all blood had been drawn out from her.

"The Commander's, ^{Kenkoku} Engraved Blade...!"

"Did he, steal it?"

In front of the shuddering knights, the Clown continued.

"Anyone can get their hands on the ^{Entaku no} ~~Engraved~~ Blade of the Round Table if just kills the possessor. Collect every last one of them! To the one who succeeds in collecting all of them, the all mighty <Seal of the Sage> will be granted!"

A chill ran down everyone's spine.

"IT'S MAGIC! CANCEL IT!"

Lutile, who was an ^{Tenkoku Tsukai} <Omen Talker>, noticed it. A "deception" was plunged in the Clown's voice. It was a small misleading combination of a small nature. In this situation where someone was killed before everyone's eyes and everyone was agitated, it was not possible to perceive just how many people were being deceived.

In this kind of situation, he should not be allowed to speak any more—

All of the Knights, possessors of the ^{Kenkoku} Engraved Blade probably all instantly felt that.

The swords that were thrust before him, all stabbed into his body simultaneously.

The clown who was cut down in pieces vomited blood. He convulsed once and like that, stopped his movements. From the dead Clowns arm, the ^{Kenkoku}

Engraved Blade released itself after turning into light and then jumped towards the king who was beside the clown. It transferred itself to the king's arm.

The ^{Kenkoku} Engraved Blade had started to lodge in the king's hand.

"Wha-...!"

Lutile, who was in dread immediately turned around.

On the venue grounds, other than the knights who were entrusted with the ^{Entaku no K} Engraved Blade of the Round Table>, there were also many spectators.

Or possibly, there were knights who weren't chosen by the ^{Entaku no Kenkoku} Engraved Blade of the Round Table regardless of having more power.

Or possibly, there were feudal lords who's dominions were being plunged into poverty because of the young king's inexperience.

Or possibly, there were completely normal people who didn't have any strength or social standing.

Or possibly, there were mercenaries who could wield power but were filled with greed of fortune.

All of them were fixedly looking at the incident that had just occurred in front of their eyes.

---oh... so even I can get my hands on that ^{Entaku no Kenkoku} Engraved Blade of the Round Table too.

Envy, Jealousy, Longing, Lutile saw all of these converge into just one emotion.

That day, on the premises of Estrelia arena; an insurrection unparalleled in history occurred. Including the participating Knights of the Round Table, there were near one hundred casualties.

Thus, the ^{Kenkoku} Engraved Blade which were supposed to be god-sent gifts for the empire became known as the catastrophe bringing forth ruin.

This was the event that had occurred three months before the meeting of Heath and the Clown girl.

Part 2[edit]

"Onii-chan, are you in a bad mood?"

The one who said that after seating at the table as if astonished was Heath's younger sister by one year.

On the red hair that was gathered at the tip of her shoulders, and in her

amethyst-like light purple eyes. Thought her features appeared to be bland, there was a certain strength that went forth from them. Thought her appearances was good enough to be able to raise the neighbours jealousy, even after she had turned 15 years old, the signs of proper development could not be seen in her figure.

Heath, who was currently lining up breakfast with quick hands; there were shades floating all over his face. His face had also become hollow as if he were downcast.

As for the red hair same as his younger sister, it grew long enough that it was possible to tie it behind his back, and his features weren't something that could leave a strong impression. But still, his hands were skilfully continuing with the preparations for the breakfast.

His father who had a lot of night shifts rarely ever got up for breakfast, and his mother had passed away early. Probably because of that, he had fully taken over the cooking duties before he had even realized it.

--That was, definitely not a dream...

Heath's complexion had been gloomy because of the incident that had occurred the previous night.

He met a lone girl, and was tormented by a dragon. Because of that fear, and probably because the girl was too mystifying, he couldn't get a wink of sleep.

--- And about listening to anything she said, she couldn't have meant for me to keep quiet about that dragon, right?

The girl who had vanished. She had let Heath go in return for a promise of obeying anything she said. That was why, even now while he was eating breakfast, he ended up thinking that Estelle might be watching from somewhere.

After thinking that much, he realized that his younger sister had a worried face.

"Ah, well, that's because yesterday's job took till late at night to finish..."

When answering so, the little sister stared at her elder brother with a concerned face.

"Even though you didn't work till your condition turned poor..."

"I-I'm saying everything's okay! Leaving that aside, did something happen in town yesterday? I didn't hear the details because I was outside the outer-wall all day."

The king's capital was surrounded by a solid outer-wall which had been repelling the Saika's invasions for a long time.

However, in the present with a number exceeding 200,000; the residents overflow from the inland, and are building their residences besides the outside wall.

This outer wall region was the only place where lower ranked soldiers like Heath were necessary.

Therefore, though a lot of information was given from Iruma who visited from the outside, the state of the inland information was frighteningly neglected.

He had said it like that to avert the conversation but Mana showed a gloomy expression after that with "aah".

"It seems that another Knight-sama was killed. On top of that, it seems that he possessed an ^{Kenkoku} Engraved Blade."

"Wha-It couldn't be...!!"

"Ah, no, It wasn't Penus-sama.

The name Mana had just said was the name of one of the senior apprentices.

He studied under the same master as Heath and his technique with a blade was incomparably better than Heath's. He had become one of the Knights of the Round Table just in his twenties.

Before Lutile Afnar appeared, Penus was the youngest Knight of the Round Table.

After learning of his senior's safety, Heath leaked a relieved breath and dropped his shoulders.

In the present times where the Battles with the Saika frequently occur, the Knights' heroic saga in distant places was like an amusement for the young

townsfolk. Whenever a traveling poet with a fast ear lavishes his written records, he can gather a crowd. Though reading something wasn't Heath's strong point, because of the nature of his job, he had a lot of chances to speak with travellers and merchants. They too seem to want to boast about being informed, so such a rumour reaches their ears very fast. A colourful heroic episode was able to satisfy Heath's curiosity.

But now, that had been lost in a disastrous notice.

This time, there were many eye witnesses. And it seems that the criminal's identity was also evident. It was a fallen "Former" noble. However, he had run away, and currently the Knight's order are chasing after him in frenzy.

It seems like catching someone who looted an ^{Kenkoku}Engraved Blade wasn't such an easy matter. More than ten wanted posters on similar incidents had appeared on the market. But most of them should not still be in this world.

Because Mana had a copy of the wanted poster, Heath memorized the rough features of the criminal. He was a blond man in his thirties, with a skinny physique and a black mole on his cheek. Though it was likely information with no significant at the moment. While his younger sister just started her breakfast, the boy had already finished the preparations for his job. Seeing that, his sister made a slightly enigmatic face.

Part 3[edit]

After leaving home, he naturally stepped into the forest. Along the highway he took to get to the barracks, this forest widely spread along. So this was a natural thing for him to do.

It was the forest where he had met Estelle last night. He was still wondering if it was all a dream but the sense of intimidation he got from the Dragon was too vivid.

--Well, there's no way they would still be there...

He noticed that he wasn't carrying his lunch. He had prepared some baked biscuits but because he dashed out like that, he had forgotten to bring it with him.

---Going back to fetch it is kind of embarrassing at this point...

Though he still had some time left, if he returned now he was sure that a “Please think a bit more about yourself too” like scolding was waiting for him.

After looking up at the densely packed surrounding forest, Heath turned around to return to the barracks. It happened at that moment.

A rustling sound resounded in the background.

“Estelle?”

Though the feeling of fear was supposed to be stronger, he let out a delightful voice and turned around...But then, Heath came to realize the thing called reality.

A single monster stood there.

Not a beast, but a monster.

Blood coloured eyeballs on its slime like epithelium. Long limbs had expanded in its body following the snake like head and the neck. It resembled a lizard but it was far larger than Heath's stature.

--A Saika...!

This time, the monster was indeed a Saika.

“Why is it in a place like this...!”

In the history of the last 1000 years, the number of times the king's capital had been attacked by the Saika was so little that it could even be counted. The very fact that one would show itself in the surroundings was also rare. It wasn't something that would appear near the forest where people lived.

Maybe it was wounded, there were cut marks here and there, and water stone like crystals were growing from there. Therefore, it might be in an irritable state. It was a situation where it would consume anything if there were prey. Fixing its gaze on Heath, the Saika crooked its mouth as if it was laughing.

---I'm going to be killed...!

It was when he stepped back in order to escape.

“Onii-chaaan, you forgot your lunchbox.”

She might have chased after him when she noticed the lunchbox. Mana had come running.

She had come near enough to be able of see the Saika. Mana turned pale and stiffened.

--If it's both of us, then I can't run away.

He resolved himself fast.

Unexpectedly, the spear set up straight did not tremble.

Behind him was his sister.

Even if it wasn't so, it was still this early in the morning. The number of residents who were sleeping weren't small. Even though it numbered only one, if they were attacked by the likes of a Saika, then there is no telling how many casualties there would be.

He was a soldier; in his hands was a weapon. And he had also learned how to use it.

There were plenty of reasons to fight it.

"Mana, run to the barracks. Bring back re-enforcements."

"Bu-but..."

"Hurry up!"

Hearing Heath shout, Mana's body trembled, and she started running away a moment later.

--It's ok like this.

At the same time, the Saika turned its limbs and changed the direction of its body. He realized that the gaze wasn't turned towards himself but his sister. The Saika might've thought that rather than the flesh of a young man, on top of that a hardened soldier, the tender flesh of a girl such as Mana was more delicious.

Just by sweeping its long tail, it could blow away a human. It knew that humans were a frail existence.

"-I won't let you!"

Heath was observing the Saika, which took a leaping stance aiming at Mana's back with a strange calmness.

What Heath was looking at was the Saika's red eyeballs.

If he could seize the core of its body, then he could deal some damage with absolute certainty. But even if he could quietly pull it off, it wasn't enough to bring it down. Heath's spear was nothing but a low priced mass produced item that even normal people could get their hands on. It would be quite difficult to pierce through the Saika's strong skin and pry into its flesh.

But if he could pierce its eyeballs then that would take away a big part of its freedom. To sum it up, it would divert its hatred towards Heath, and Mana won't be targeted anymore.

The shaking head that was attached on the tip of the neck was like a snake. It would be very difficult to pierce its eyeballs point on with the spear by normal means. It was throbbing with a more lively motion than that of humans. And besides, it might even be an impossible feat to accomplish from the start.

--- It will not hit the mark even if I aim spot on. Aim straight. The target is that one dot in the distance.

The spear is a point. Having the tip of a blade, it is a tool to pierce the target.

To be able to set up a mark on top of a small dot was not an easy thing to do. But, do be able to draw a line on top of that dot was something even a child could do.

Connecting the apex of the spear with the target, furthermore a small point; if one could actually make a waypoint towards the virtual target, it was possible to make the tip pass through even a small hole opened up on a board.

“Fu-”

Remembering what he had learnt from his master, Heath let out a sharp breath and threw the spear.

「Swish」

It aimed, and did not miss. Fresh blood sprayed out from the Saika's red pupil.

The spouted blood instantaneously hardened, it turned into a subtle gemstone

like crystal, and fell to the ground.

This was a Saika's blood. The reason behind it was not known but for some reason, when their blood came in contact with the atmosphere, it crystallized.

"Graaaaaaaagh"

The Saika writhed after letting out a shriek of anguish.

However, Heath didn't have the leisure to change his expression.

---It broke!

The tip of the spear broke off from the base. It couldn't withstand the impact with the now wriggling Saika.

The Saika which lay on the ground looked at Heath with an eye filled with hatred before long. An opponent who was no different from a mere weed had taken one eye from it. It wasn't sure if they had the thing called 'Self-respect', much less talking about a sense of disgrace.

With the spear which had become just a wooden stick after losing its bladed tip, how far could he fight against it?

"---!"

「Swish」

It swung down its snake like head like a mallet.

Heath who was already on guard was somehow able to avoid that direct attack.

"Ugh...!"

Even so, he let out a groan. Because that strike smashed the ground, some debris flew off hitting him and knocking him way.

---This isn't the power of a living thing...!

The thing that continued that ballistic attack was supposed to be its own head.

In spite of that, when the Saika once again raised up its head as if it was nothing, it became seized with confusion.

Sweat was rapidly running along the tip of his chin from his cheeks.

---The next one, I can't dodge it...

He was able to fully dodge the attack just now because he was already anticipating it. But the shockwave remaining from that single attack just now spread a pain through Heath's body. He tumbled on the ground and no longer had the time to stand up.

---Still, I have to hold out till Mana manages to get away.

Even though he was about to be killed, he would try to buy more time until he would die.

But it was when he finally resolved himself to death.

"Get down--"

After hearing that sudden pressing voice, Heath reflexively bent his body down.

Immediately after, a giant sword flew through overhead.

The sword that had come flying deeply pierced the Saika's shoulder.

---That still isn't a mortal wound!

It was writhing on the ground.

"Stand back, I will take care of the rest."

She had the fragrance of a flower that was not suitable on a battleground.

The one who had jumped in was a single girl. Shaking her long raven hair, she touched Heath's face.

"Wait here."

The girl was not holding a weapon. The sword that had come flying was most likely her's. Facing a Saika empty handed wasn't any different from committing suicide.

Without listening to Heath's warnings, the girl charged towards the Saika. She thrust out her right hand as if gripping something.

"Come forth, <Knight of the White Hand>"

Along with her voice which seemed as if she were singing, her right hand started glowing with a purple resonance, and then instantly she weaved up a sword.

—A sword, she summoned it...?

It was a rapier. It could slice, but the sword's speciality was piercing.

“-Ha—”

The girl fires and thrust her sword keenly but the Saika lifted up its unhurt forefoot.

「Zassu-」

Blood sprayed up, and once again it crystalized before long, but that's as far as it went.

---It's no use, it won't fall!

The rapier stabbed into the Saika's foot but it wasn't possible to pull it out after it had penetrated to the core.

Between the two cylindrical legs, one was stabbed, and the one was cut down from its shoulder. If the opponent were a human or a beast, they would have become completely helpless at this.

But the opponent was a Saika. It would not fall helpless at only this degree.

After opening its snake like giant mouth, it raised its head targeting the girl. Breaking the ground, it was an attack strong enough to stop Heath's movement just with its remaining shockwaves.

The girl, who was at that point black range because her rapier was fixed there, didn't have any mean to dodge it.

“Return - <Knight of the Lake>!”

At her sharp cry, something sharply came flying through the wind.

Another new sword was grasped on the girl's left hand. Even if she was an ^{Tenkoku Tsu} <Omen Talker>, she should have had the time to use magic.

While Heath kept on looking, the Saika's movement had stopped.

And then, with the pull of gravity its neck severed and naturally, it fell to the ground.

--It was cut off...But when? No, it came back.

Heath realized that the girl's sword was the sword she had thrown at the beginning. It seems like the sword weaved by magic had the power to soar through space by itself. It came flying from the rear and sliced the Saika's neck.

Scattering the red crystallized body, the corpse fell over. After confirming that the Saika could no longer move, the girl finally turned around.

"Are you injured?"

Long glossy black hair and violet coloured pupils. She was not wearing armour but rather, her clothes were that of a student. On the rings inserted on her arms and her ten fingers, <Omen> was carved and the back of her hands were covered with gloves.

She was an <Omen Talker>.

Even for the great <Omen Talkers>, it was said that they could own 6 to 8 <Omens> at once. But she was possessing over 10 of those <Omens>. The fact that the girl was the possessor of extraordinary power was obvious even in the eyes of Heath, who was just a normal person.

"Y-you are..."

Heath had seen her face somewhere. It was a place even more disconnected from the highway than here but, he had witnessed her subjugate a Saika. Her figure which overwhelmed a Saika in a school uniform was still vivid.

The girl observed Heath, whose mouth was half open, from head to toe.

"You don't seem to have any injuries. Nonetheless, I just happened to save your life, at the least show some gratitude."

After hearing that, Heath had realized that he still hadn't said his thanks.

Correcting his confused attitude, he bowed.

"Thanks for sending reinforcements! I was just about to be that monsters meal!"

As he said that, the girl started giggling.

"You really don't need to be that humble...Ara, you, seems like you're quite young."

But the girl who had just said that was about the same age as Heath.

After that once again she looked at Heath, but this time with a curious gaze.

"You, are you a soldier? At such an age?"

Even in a situation like this, Heath gave a bitter smile at the girl who had said that despite of her own age.

"Even if you say that, aren't you about the same age as I? Even if you are an <Omen Talker>, do you not think it is weird, just one student fighting a Saika in a school uniform? After a reply like that, the girl's eyes widened as if she were surprised from the bottom of her heart.

After that she checked her own clothes, and nodded as if she understood him.

"Speaking of which, it was like that, wasn't it? I haven't been called like that recently, so I had forgotten about it."

"I wonder if it's something one could forget..."

After leaking that shocked voice, Heath realized that he still hadn't acquired the girl's name.

"I am called Heath. You, that was amazing. Please tell me your name. I didn't think there was a person like you of my own age."

"I'm Lu..."

"Lu?"



For some reason, the girl had stopped speaking. Following that, she started staring at the empty space, and suddenly, she said this as if she had just remembered it.

“Luna.”

“You definitely thought of that just now.”

Last night was a full moon. The moon was still visible in the early morning sky.

“But that's all right, isn't it?...Eh?”

The girl suddenly turned her face around and leaked an astonished voice.

In her line of sight was the Saika's head. It was what the girl had just cut down.

“This, did you do it?”

There was a broken spear tip in one of the Saika's eye sockets.

“Ah, well...”

That was all he had said.

Claiming something like that in front of the girl who had just brought it down without receiving a single injury was somewhat embarrassing. “How many times have you fought a Saika till now?”

"There's no way something like that could be possible."

Though, if it was about witnessing it then he had done so before.

Rather, the girl in front of him had defeated that Saika. The only thing Heath had done then was just about throwing a few rocks. It was miserable even thinking back now. Though it was rather questioning, he could not claim that he had defeated it.

The girl leaked a breath as if saying she could not believe it, and then faced Heath.

"You—"

As she opened her mouth to say something, a voice calling from the distance could be heard. He seemed to be the girl's companion. He seemed to be a knight or a high ranked soldier who was wearing high grade armour very different than the one's a low ranked soldier like Heath was wearing.

He could not catch what was said but the girl tone and complexion changed.

"Please leave now. If you remain here any longer than it might become troublesome."

"Eh, but..."

Though he had objections, it certainly did seem like the Saika was being chased by something. It was probably the girl and that fellow. And the fact that it came as close as the main road was not something they wanted to be known.

Before running off, Heath spoke to the girl just once.

"Will you tell me your real name the next time we meet?"

"I shall consider it."

The smile the girl had shown before he left seemed somewhat lonely, but Heath started running towards his barracks.

Part 4[edit]

Fortunately, Mana seemed to have reached the barracks safely. It was when she had misplaced Heath and was running away from soldiers with some

pompous appearances. The instant Mana had spotted Heath; she ran over to him and burst into tears. And it took some time to calm her down.

The superior officer who had known the circumstances told Heath that it was okay to take the day off, but this was his long-awaited job. After taking his sister back home, he once again returned to the barracks.

In the guardhouse, his took on of the spears hanging on the wall. Though It was a simple item without any ornaments, it excelled in sharpness.

His own spear had broken in that previous incident.

–What should I do? Even though I have to buy Mana's textbooks...

To the poor Heath, even a cheap spear was not something he could afford purchase often.

At the tip of the spear, there was a sharply honed edge. The long pole supporting the edge was limited to only piercing, slashing and striking downwards but because of its long length, it can bring out power beyond the users physical strengths.

The spear was a tool used in battlefields. If one grips it, it naturally locks his emotions.

Maintaining the spear with the whetstone and an old cloth soaked in oil, Heath started to recall

–The <Engraved Blades> war huh...

For the last half year, the attacks from the Saika have intensified, and the tension of battle had even made its way to the king's capital, which was a long distance from the front lines. The king's capital being directly attacked was something unthinkable but just a few moments ago, even that protection had been broken. If it wasn't for that girl who called herself Luna, there would certainly have been one casualty today.

The animals of the forest should have also felt the sighs of wars, and incidents of stray Saika attacking people had also increased. That Saika appearing in a place which was just beside human residence just a while ago was most likely also because of that.

And then, there was also this internal discord.

Cladding himself in armour, and taking up a spear was to protect the citizen from an enemy like that, in other words, to fight as a soldier.

"Hey newbie, if the maintenances are done then hurry up and go to your post!"

"Roger!"

After being yelled at by a senior soldier, Heath replied with a shout and hastened towards the post he was appointed to. The barracks was built just inside the outer wall gate, and the Main Street that continued from the gate ran along almost all the main facilities in town including the royal castle. —A heroic tale doesn't only belong to the hero.

The people always long for the heroes who do brilliant deeds of arms. Aiming to be heroes like them, people start wanting to be strong.

But, if the only character in the story was the hero, then heroic tales would not exist.

There was an indispensable existence that should always be in a heroic tale.

Then exactly what was it?

Someone who should be protected?

Indeed, someone to protect was certainly necessary. It could be the people of a country. Or it could be a beautiful princess. Saving either, certainly that was necessary to earn the title of a hero.

But, a hero apart from them exists too. A hero who can accomplish anything without needing help from anyone. So it isn't always an absolutely necessary thing.

Then, was it the existence of an adversary?

A hero who defeats evil was indeed something that shakes one's heart. Slashing an enormous enemy with a single sword and defeating it was definitely a sight that could even bring tears to our eyes.

But, there are heroes who go through a lot of distress in order to save

someone. Defeating the enemy wasn't the only thing in a heroic tale.

"So you've arrived."

When he arrived at his post, he soon saw a young man with a similar appearance near the spot. All day today, it seemed that the young man would be his partner for the time he would protect that place.

After Heath nodded in agreement, the young man returned a ferocious looking smile.

The glint in his eyes were so full of fighting spirit that it made Heath unconsciously thank the fact that he was not a Saika.

And when Heath took an upright posture at his allocated position, the young man thrust the end of his spear on the ground.

"Well then, let us pray that nothing at all happens today and start the watch-keeping."

Heath occupation, it was 'Gatekeeper'.

In all heroic tales, the one to call the hero after noticing an abnormal event before everyone else, and receiving the hero who had come from a long distance, then unfolding a life or death battle for not letting that hero pass was always the gatekeeper!

At the same time, the one to lose his life first of all in all heroic tales was generally the gatekeeper. But Heath was satisfied with his job.

Rather, because Heath who had no talents excelled in this, it gave him a good sense of fulfilment.

Part 5[edit]

About an hour after she saw off her brother, Mana came to the workshop of an <Omen Meister>/ <Tenkoku Technician>

"Good morning. You're quite early today too, Mana."

"Yes. Please take care of me as always."

As Mana bowed down and finished her greetings, the Shopkeeper showed a

small gentle smile.

"Your face seems kind of pale, are you all right?"

"I'm fine. Everything's all right!"

The shopkeeper no longer pressed the issue after she cheerfully replied like that. Mana entered the interior of the shop.

—Just because it's the king's capital doesn't mean it's completely safe...

She was sure to have understood it. But still, until she had personally witnessed that monster and had seen her brother fight it, she did not distinctly feel the sense of danger.

—Scary...

Usually, she had spent daily life in town completely unrelated to the likes of a Saika. And for it to actually appear so near, there was no way she could remain calm.

That's why Mana clenched her fists tightly.

"I have to quickly become a first class <Omen Talker> — and I myself will protect Onii-chan!"

....She was a strong-willed younger sister.

Mana was lining up the merchandise bringing them from the workshop to the shop. The wanted poster she had shown her brother Heath this morning was also something that was circulated in work. She secretly took it home thinking that her brother who loved rumours would definitely be pleased with it.

There were many varieties of magic that were said to exist in the world, but in the end about all of them were powers used by making use of the <Omen>. Though generally, there were people who were called 'Magicians' but people following that path would without a doubt claim themselves to be an <Omen Talker> .

And that's why, the techniques of an <Omen User> could after all, only be learnt from an <Omen User>. A suitable amount of expenses were necessary in order to study it and Heath was working precisely to earn those expenses.

Mana too, wasn't just staying at home reading her textbooks but rather, she was helping the works of an <Omen Meister> / <Tenkoku Technician> like this and was at the same time, receiving the trainings of the <Omen>/<Tenkoku>.

The items Mana was lining up on the shelf by the order of the shopkeeper were mostly ornaments. But there weren't only rings or hair ornaments for women but also a number Cuff links and Belt Buckles targeted at men. There were also Sword handles and decorated scabbards too.

But the most common one was the item with small alphabetical character-like engraved patterns.

There were opinions that the pattern was based on the new destiny the world had decided to take.

Every existing thing has something like its own blueprint, which had established the path something or someone would take from birth till the time of its destruction.

The <Omen> was something like an artificially produced blueprint similar to that one. It was something that would decide how much a flame would spread, or how it would disappear when it burned out.

And the <Omen Talkers> who could freely manipulate that were something like prophets.

"The flame burns like this" chanting a verdict like that, they distort the laws of the world in accordance to it. Only those who possessed violet coloured eyes could foresee the <Omen> which was also the blueprint and at the same time, destiny.

After a while, as she finished lining up the merchandise, the door of the shop was quietly knocked.

"Hey, miss shop assistant over there, do you have a moment?"

The one who stood there was a girl with a peculiar appearance.

-A Clown?

The girl had an odd appearance.

Her exposure was quite high, even her navel and arms was freely exposed.

—Eh? This person, she's really beautiful...?



As she was fixedly gazing at the girl, Mana realized that she had called the girl plenty beautiful.

Glossy silver hair like silk threads, and red eyes like a ruby. Her eyebrows were also long and beautiful and her small lips were of a beautiful reddish pink scarlet colour that could charm anyone. Even if she wasn't in such an appearance, her looks were such that anyone would turn back to take a look at her petite, slim and slender features.

As she was fascinated without even realizing it herself, the girl showed a socialable smile.

“I want to do business here; can I speak with the big wig?”

“Ah, Yes! I'll ask him.”

Mana finally returned to her senses and called the shopkeeper.

After seeing the girl's appearance, the shopkeeper made a sullen face.

“Are you going to do your performance in front of the shop?”

“That's right. The plaza was already suppressed you see. Luckily if it's around here then it's fine since it's quite big and there are a lot of people too.”

“Why in front of our shop?”

“Since this place looked like the one with the fewest customers.”

That one ridiculous remark made both Mana and the Shopkeeper widen their eyes.

“I hire the place I do my business in. You guys will attract the customers. Don’t you think these are good enough conditions?”

Normally, someone should get angry at this.

A clown for attracting customers was unnecessary, even if water was slashed, she most likely could not complain.

It was supposed to be like that but her voice which was filled with self-confidence...rather than that, the atmosphere which indicated that she was about to start something so interesting that it was no use to resist, thoroughly blew away all the remaining resistance.

The shopkeeper gushed out excitedly

“Hahahaha. You’re an honest one. I like it.”

“Aha, now you’re talking! Deal done?”

“Hmm...How about five copper coins for the location?”

“All right then! I’ll pay 10 coins in place of 5~”

The shopkeeper made quite a surprised face.

“That’s some self-confidence you got there.”

“Aha, I’m good by just receiving smiles. But of course, I plan on making you guys laugh too!”

The shopkeeper widened his eyes once again at this and started to excitedly laugh once again.

“I’m sorry. This is why I’ll spread out the shop now. Let’s study in the evening okay?”

“Yes. It’s all right.”

Usually, she was tutored in the time after she lined up all the merchandize and

till the shop opened. It was a matter of disappointment but it was between the studies of one shop assistant and the management of the shop itself. 天秤にかける方がどうかしている。

After seeing the shopkeeper going inside the shop, the girl suddenly made a mischievous face.

“Perhaps, did I ruin your schedule?”

“Not at all, only the time was shifted.”

After Mana replied like that, the girl showed a cheerful smile.

“Thanks. I am Estelle, you are?”

“I am called Mana.”

“Mana, as an apology, I’ll let you see my performance from a special seat. You better enjoy it!”

Part 6[edit]

“Rebellions...huh”

After the tension from encountering the Saika had passed, Heath remembered the conversation from this morning.

Another knight, on top of that, a possessor of an <Engraved Blade> had been killed.

<Engraved Blade of the Round Table> — it was a certain crest that had appeared on the bodies of 12 of the knights among the Estrelia Order of Knights. The ones who obtained it were given a power that surpassed that of an <Omen>, furthermore, the one to collect all of those <Engraved Blades> would be given the <Seal of the Sage> which had the power to grant any wish.

It was said that almost half on the <Knights of the Round Table> were killed only in the first week. At the same time, a few <Engraved Blades> were stolen.

After that, the Knights took every possible measure to regain the lost <Engraved Blades> but conversely; the crests that were snatched away were greater in number.

A certain knight was betrayed by his trusted friend. A certain knight who had intervened in a dispute was killed by the one he protected, and again a certain knight who had gained an <Engraved Blade> in such a manner was assailed by bandits.

There were various people who were deprived of it.

But if there were people who wanted the <Seal of the Sage>, there were also people who plotted rebellion because of their animosity towards the young king. If there were people who were present at the place of the scramble, there were also beggars who were suffering from hunger and poverty too.

Like that, in the moment one screamed in joy because he was able to snatch away an <Engraved Blade>, his life was also snatched away by someone who was aiming for it too. Therefore, the possessors of the <Engraved Blade> all alike hid them by all means.

The people who wanted the <Engraved Blades> attacked anyone who looked suspicious.

Though there was the Knights Order for suppressing such disturbances, most of the people who were at the core of the order were <Engraved Blade> possessors, and they were the ones who were targeted and killed first of all.

To make matters worse, the king who had come to acquire one of those dangerous <Engraved Blades> had become more introvert than before and shut himself up in his room. He hadn't adopted even one plan to restore public order.

The knights themselves were being targeted, and the insurgents were introducing themselves magnificently.

Now that it had become like this, it was already a civil war.

And the people were calling that civil war the <Engraved Blades> war.

– So even the Knights of the Round Table can lose their lives huh...

Heath's senior disciple who was accepted as a Knight of the Round Table was such an expert that someone like Heath couldn't even compare to his feet. The other knights should possess similar strength or perhaps greater than that.

With strength without any room for dissatisfaction, even if it wasn't Heath,

they were figures filled with aspiration for anyone.

—And now, there aren't even half of them left...

The ones to first receive the <Engraved Blades> were, knights who were bestowed with a title. Associated only with legends, they were only bestowed upon the 12 who possessed the greatest strength even amongst the knights. They were the 'Knights of the Round Table'.

But even those strongest knights, who were always targeting the <Engraved Blades>; one by one they lost their lives. In the mere 3 months since the Engraved Blade Wars broke out, It seems only a few of them were left alive.

"Good morning."

Before long, it seems to have become the time for school to start. Boys and girls in their school uniform passed through the gate.

On the pillar of the gate Heath was guarding, 「Estrelia Royal Knight's Academy」was written.

Situated roughly in the centre of the town, and near the Royal palace, it was one of the symbols of the town.

As the name implies, it was an academy for training knights. But there was also an <Omen> department besides the knights, so students with violet coloured pupils could also be seen. Probably all of the students present there were learning battle techniques of a higher grade than Heath.

As Heath's partner gatekeeper was throwing greetings with a smiling face, greeting in twos or threes were being returned from over there.

The fact that they were studying here also meant that they had enough money to pay for the tuition.

As expected, most of them were children of nobles or rich merchants. But since they returned the previous greetings, it seems like they were given proper public morals coaching too.

Though it was like a different world for the Heath who was having trouble just to buy a single text book; being greeted 'Good morning' and returning a 'Good morning' similarly, Heath was relieved to confirm the fact that the opposite

party was also human.

—Mana too, I want her to pass through there soon...

His younger sister who possessed light purple pupils had potential as an <Omen Talker>. If it was here then she could smooth out her talent, and discrimination toward commoners by the other students should be little.

After that, as they continued guarding the front of the gate; the number of attending students eventually decreased.

“By the way, you’re a face I haven’t seen before. A newcomer?”

When the queue of the students broke up, the partnering gatekeeper opened his mouth.

“Err, since I usually work in near the town’s outer wall, it’s been a while since I worked inside.”

A gatekeeper was somehow or other, still a soldier.

Receiving the minimum amount of training, a post that manages such soldiers was also necessary.

Gatekeepers were managed all together in a lower grade soldier training camp. And they were dispatched here and there.

Therefore, rather than being restricted in one place, they usually worked in many different locations.

“Eh? Then why’d ya transfer to this side?”

“I actually had duties from the afternoon today, but then I saw the notice to replace the vacant position here. I decided to come in only for this morning.”

“Hou, sure work hard huh?”

“Hahaha. I want to send my younger sister to school.”

The young man nodded with consent.

“Come to think of it, this academy here also accepted commoners. Then why not for yourself but your sis?”

“Well that’s cause I’m already past that age. And besides, my sister has a

talent that I don't have."

Heath would turn 17 this year.

He hadn't done any type of studies other than training as a guard and spear practices till then. He was a person, who had only received education from his parents. He can read and write without any sense of discomfort but it could not be called his strong point either.

His education was just about that amount.

The young man nodded in admiration.

"That's commendable."

After saying that, the young man slightly pushed out his hand before him.

"If I also had one of those <Engraved Blades of the Round Table>, I'd gladly kill off this daily life of standing up straight all day with a nice farewell."

"Ahaha. I like this job quite a lot though. I can speak with all kinds of people too."

"You...rather, good job remaining human like that..."

Heath, who was being stared at by a delicate eye seemingly filled with either sympathy or friendliness stirred a little worriedly.

And then he muttered as if he was talking to himself.

"<Engraved Blades of the Round Table> huh...."

At that word, the young man grinned widely.

"If you could get your hands on one of those <Engraved Blades of the Round Table>, what'd you wish for?"

This man spoke without any restraints. Lately, if people had free time, they would always bring up that conversation. It might seem like some kind of lottery. Obtaining an <Engraved Blade> but not the <Seal of the Sage>, it was said like that because his majesty the king was the owner of one of those 2 things.

Saying that you're aiming for the <Seal of the Sage> was the same as saying you would snatch away the <Engraved Blade> from the king. In other words, it would indicate treason.

Heath turned his neck with a troubled expression.

"Eh?Umm... As i said before, I want my sister to get in to school, something like that?"

"You...to go that far. Isn't that what they call being a siscon?"

Heath, who was more or less self-conscious about it, fell silent at that reply.

"If it was me, then of course, I'd go for territory and fortune."

"Will such a demand go through with just one <Engraved Blade>?"

The young man began to laugh.

"Think about it. Even the king should want to put the <Engraved Blades> in his sack right? Then if I vow to work for him as a knight then most demands would be accepted."

Though in reality, the ones who attacked the knights at first were probably people with purposes along those lines.

"But if you kill a knight, you'll become a criminal."

"Yes, that is, if I attack a knight it'll probably become like that but-"

After he said that, Heath realized it.

"Ah, I see. There are a lot of people who possess the <Engraved Blades> other than the knights."

"Yes Yes. If I screw up those people and present the <Engraved Blade> to the king, then rather than a criminal, I'll probably become a hero, right?"

He really didn't think like wanting to own one. Specially, he didn't want it to affect his sister.

The gatekeeper showed a shady expression. How did he perceive such a Heath?

"That's right. If it was for getting more social status, even a doctor would seriously scuffle for it..."

"Eh?"

As Heath made a surprised face, the gatekeeper closed his mouth shut. And

then he infringed an unpleasant look.

"I have a sick younger sister back home. I can't get enough money, but in the first place, with a poor commoner as a client, the doctor wouldn't even do a decent examination. Even if I can't buy the medicine, there should be something I could do. But even so, he wouldn't tell me that."

It seems like he had quite a serious problem to deal with. As Heath reacted with bewilderment to that, the gatekeeper showed a frank smile.

"Well, that's why if I could get my hands on one of those <Engraved Blades> and become a hero, it'd be quite the charming story." Heath nodded in admiration at the gatekeeper who was behaving very brightly.

"A hero huh?... When that time comes, please let me hear your heroic saga too."

When he said that, the young man widened his eyes.

"You...really are impartial."

"I-is that so?"

If anything, that was something he said as a compliment. Though he was admired, inversely he felt troubled. The young man made a carefree laugh at the Heath who was refuting.

"Well, mere gatekeepers like us shouldn't even have the chance to much less touch something like that."

"I guess that might be the case here..."

Laughing like that,

「Oh?」

Heath had a sudden realization.

— The edge is blue?

Warm sunlight directly falls on the area surrounding this gate, which was facing east.

The sunlight was being reflected on the spear edge the gatekeeper, but the colour was a bit different from Heath's one. Maybe it was from the differences in

the maintenances. Then, a young man was walking by beyond the pass tilting his head a little.

Even though it wasn't such a cold season, he was wearing a frock coat. Though he wasn't wearing any armour, a great sword unsuitable for his stature was hung on his back. He was probably a knight.

"Ah~"

Heath who recognised that figure reflexively raised his voice.

And the knight probably recognized Heath too. Making a slightly surprised face, the young man then smiled frankly.

"Gillette Nii-chan!"

"Heath? It's been a while."

Saying that, He and Heath held the shoulder in a friendly fashion.

"Heath, you were stationed here?"

"Only for today by chance, normally outside the outer-wall though."

"Well... If master saw this, he'd definitely be shocked. You have perseverance, and your muscles aren't bad either. So why are you doing something like being a gatekeeper...?"

"Err, the master told me that I definitely wouldn't become strong. And I don't have talent for the spear either, so I think being a gatekeeper is plenty of accomplishment."

As he replied with confidence, his senior apprentice covered his forehead as if it was hurting.

"You're really are too good natured to be associated with Gato Plugatorio ..."

When their master's name was mentioned, Heath asked a question as if trying to change the topic.

"Nii-chan, are you okay yourself? I heard that most of the Knights of the Round Table are already dead."

The person who was asked, Gillette's face turned dark at that question as expected.

“Ah, sorry.”

“No, don’t mind it.”

Interrupting their conversation there, the gatekeeper revealed a surprised voice.

“O-oi. That person, he couldn’t be... How the hell are you acquainted with him?”

Looking at Gillette once, he quickly turned his head sideways realizing the fact that he was in a hurry. Heath made a brief introduction.

“He is my senior apprentice. He should have some business at this academy... right?”

“Yes. I am kind of in a hurry. I would be grateful if you could let me pass.”

Gillette Doulas Penus, he was Heath’s senior in apprenticeship and also one of the Knights of the Round Table who stood side by side with <Knight Princess> Lutile Afnar.

By the time Heath became Gato’s disciple, he had already become expert enough to make a name of himself as a knight. Besides, he was also an aristocrat.

He was supposed to be an existence beyond the clouds in case of Heath, but he was a frank person and still looked after the young Heath.

Therefore, even though there was a big difference in their abilities and social standings, Heath thought of him as an older brother and called him so too.

After telling Gillette to pass, the other gatekeeper also saluted and made way.
“By all means, please pass.”

Waving his hand favourably, Gillette passed through the gate. It was precisely then

“Eh, Oi, what are you-“

While he said that, the gatekeeper had already thrust his spear.

“Chi-“

Gillette swiftly turned around and caught the spear.

"Seriously...Gatekeepers nowadays don't have any education at all!"

Sweat oozed out on his brows. And his abdomen was also dyed red. He was not able to avoid it.

After seeing the gatekeeper trying to lunge the spear with a desperate look in his eyes, Heath finally came to his senses.

"Sto-stop it!"

As he jumped forward right away, it turned into a brawl and he fell on the ground with the gatekeeper. He was somehow able to get on top and pin him down but on the contrary, his arm was seized.

"Let go, don't get in my way!"

The gatekeeper who had a frantic expression had so much strength that he could not possibly be the same person as before.

The gatekeeper quickly picked up his spear and like that, turned to attack Gillette.

And then—

The gatekeepers head danced in midair.

Gillette had already drawn his sword. This was the difference in power between one of the Knights of the Round Table and a mere gatekeeper.

From the body that had lost its head, fresh blood sprayed out like a fountain. The gatekeeper's body slowly bent from the knees and collapsed on the ground front first.

“–hii?”

That, unluckily, collapsed facing Heath's direction. Soaked in the scattered blood from its neck, Heath raised a scream.

A lukewarm, unpleasant liquid happened to fall on his face. It had a disgusting taste like smelly, rusty iron which made him want to vomit. The round thing that was thrown on the ground changed, and Heath's eyes made contact with the two eyeballs stuck on it.

—What in the world is this...?

Rather than the crystalized blood that the Saika shed, blood similar to his vividly flowed on.

His head was about to go senseless. Should he run away? Or should he get enraged because his co-worker was killed?

He was killed – yes, a person had died before his eyes. But didn't this guy also want to kill someone?

Being panic-stricken and even forgetting to stand up, he was just sitting there on the ground. But the Gillette let out a groan and fell to his knees.

"Guh..." –

Seeing this, Heath had just one direct thought.

–A wounded person...I have to save him...

That was what he did when he wanted to save that girl who was attacked by a dragon (or he thought she was attacked by the dragon), something like a condition reflexive action.

"Gillette Nii-chan, a-are you okay?–hii!"

Moving based on a blind idea and approaching Gillette, after that being pointed at with a sword by him; that certainly did break his heart.

"I had enough! Ju-just what the heck is going on here..."

Though he had received training as a soldier, the matter this morning was the first time he had experienced combat that was actually like real 'combat'.

A person dying in front of him, and being pointed at with a sword by a human too, this was the first time for him. Too many things have been happening since this morning, and Heath's mind could not keep up with all of it.

When Heath fell on in back and held his head tightly, Gillette slightly clicked his tongue. "Sorry...Good grief, I seriously lost my edge. Letting my guard down because it was Lutile's academy..."

"I-in any case, medical treatment–"

Though there was a medical office inside the academy, Gillette's bleeding wasn't small. It was probably better to stop the bleeding before moving him.

Tearing his cloth, he had closed the wound tying it but then, it somewhat changed into a darkish colour.

—What the hell, this wound...?

As he unconsciously stopped his hand, Gillette exclaimed as in moaning.

“...Shit, it’s poison.”

“Poison!?”

In the time he said that, Gillette already coughed up blood. Heath remembered that the gatekeepers spear was painted in a strange blue colour.

Seeing the red that seeped into the pure white gloves, Gillette turned towards Heath.

“Heath, lend me your shoulder.”

“Bu-but, rather than moving now...”

“The school should have more effecting medical treatment right?”

“Y-yeah.”

Heath put his shoulder under Gillette’s arm, and became his support.

Only the headless corpse of the gatekeeper was left there. A little further was the fallen head which was wrapped in an expression similar to hatred and fear. It had a look that certainly did not seem to be of this world.

The one addressing that corpse was an invisible voice. There wasn’t a single human figure anywhere except the corpse.

“To be reduced to such a state, you, who desired the <Engraved Blade> are truly very laughably stunning. I too, shall scatter and affix that one flower.”

The voice, as if it was conversing with the corpse continued speaking.

“Hihihī—, do you not care being just a corpse? Do you not care about being the dead that’s inferior to even a beast?”

The voiced raised a really happy laughter.

“Wonderful. What magnificent stubbornness. Fate really has been an incomprehensible thing, hasn’t it? And it is my very duty to prop up a flower to

that fate."

With that sentence, the headless corpse suddenly started to twitch.

"Ah, How wonderful it is! How sorrowful! Now come, and go forth for you younger siblings suffering from diseases. Please show to this clown, the end of you who is so wretchedly stunning."

As if responding to the clown's voice, the headless corpse stood up.

Part 7[edit]

Fortunately or not, since school time had already started, there weren't a single person around. If there were students around, it would definitely become a huge fuss and reach the school in due time, which would definitely cause some troubles.

Passing through the gate, and approaching the building with the medical office, people who were probably male and female teachers came out with confused expressions.

"Gillette-sama, how did something like this happen!?"

"Hurry up and call the doctor!"

Gillette replied to the teachers who were shrieking and screaming with a tedious tone.

"I can walk by myself. Rather than that, call Lutile."

"Lutile still hasn't come to school yet. There seemed to be some kind of incident outside..."

"Then call her and bring her here."

At Gillette's word, the female teacher immediately dashed out the gate. The male teacher cut in opposite of Heath and supported Gillette.

Eventually they reached the medical office and lay the knight down on the bed. The teacher inevitably turned towards Heath.

"Now then, what in the world does this mean!"

Certainly, the only one who knew the entire story other than Gillette was only Heath. He could not bring himself to ask for an explanation from the injured Gillette, and while Heath was starting to speak disorderly, Gillette suddenly cut in.

“Sensei, he is the same age as one of your student’s right? Could you not let him change into those clothes?”

After hearing that, Heath finally remembered what kind of appearance he had. There was blood on his head. Blood marks still remained after he walked here.

The teacher probably also came to his senses at Gillette’s words. He raised his eyes awkwardly.

“Certainly, it would be troublesome if you walk around the school in that figure. There are some student uniforms on that left shelf. Please use them.”

After bowing to the teacher, Heath opened the closet. There were probably Female use uniforms on the left closet.

The teacher began to treat Gillette’s wounds, and the hot water bowl was passed to Heath too.

As he washed, the bowl was stained red.

—By the way, you’re a face I haven’t seen before. A newcomer?

It was the blood of the gatekeeper who frankly spoke that line. But he had suddenly attacked Gillette as if he was a different person.

Was it sympathy towards the dead gatekeeper? Or perhaps mortifications towards the traitor? Or was it just because it was a scary experience? Even he himself could not tell.

As he washed away the blood from his face, the door of the medical office was knocked.

“Is it Lutile?”

Speaking of which, Gillette had called for the person name Lutile. He remembered that they were told she hadn’t yet come to school but, did she arrive already?

—By Lutile, that *<Knight Princess>*?

Lutile Afnar — She was the lone women in the *<Knights of the Round Table>*. He had heard that she lived in the King's Capital, but to think she went to this school, he started doubting his own ears.

Hesitating to be in such a sloppy appearance in front of a Knight of the Round Table, it was when Heath had become confused after putting on the school uniform.

“Wh-what on earth is this—?”

The teacher who had opened the door, creamed in a muffled voice.

“Eh...?”

Turning around, Heath could not comprehend what had just occurred.

Bleeding from his chest, the teacher collapsed.

The headless body of the gatekeeper stood beyond the door.

“Oops, that was a mistake. Wrong person.”

The headless body talked in a cheerful tone. After looking carefully, its arm was holding its head which was sliced off, and the one talking was the head.

“You bastard, you were a Clown!”

The knight who was lying on the bed leaped up. But his knees were shaking and his complexion was pale too. The poison was spreading.

But even with that, Gillette took off the gloves on his left hand and shouted out

“Come forth, *<Steinbock>*!”

After he shouted out, particles of light purple colour formed in the knight's hand.

It was a single spear. The spearhead wasn't a bladed edge, but a round cone. It casts away the ability to parry and slash down, but puts all the power in the forward thrust.

Gillette threw that spear aiming the gatekeeper.

「Shuu」

The body disappeared from the guard who was already a corpse.

The scattered light did not stop at the destruction of the guards body but also went through the wall behind.

-<Omen>? But his eyes are...?

Gillette's eyes were still blue just like in the past. Then he should not be an <Omen Talker>.

Facing the knight who blasted away the guard, Heath doubted his eyes.

A single blade had pierced the knight's body.

“Gillette Nii-chan!”

“Guh-”

Coughing out blood, the knight fell to his knees.

It was probably the guards. A dagger was stabbed into Gillette's chest. Before Heath could even rush up to him, he fell on the ground.

“Shit...In a place like this...Sorry...Luti..le...”

After muttering something, strength left from his senior's body.

Even someone from afar could tell that he had died.

The person he had admired since he was a child passed away from this world in a moment without any herald.

—No,no way.....?

Heath had been completely stupefied.

If one would say the name of Gillette of the Knights of the Round Table, they would think of a person with the title of <Kazakiri>, having a slim stature but wielding a long sword unfit for him, he was an owner of the anecdote that was able to be called by many heroic episodes.

Even though he had received a surprise attack and poison, was he really the type to be defeated like that?

“...?”

As he was overcome with surprise, the knight's right hand started to let out a faint light.

"Uwah~"

The light eventually started to glow brilliantly and then leaped towards Heath.

As he was covering his eyes, the light pierced Heath's arm without any shock.

"-hmm?"

As he timidly opened his eyes, he only saw the knight and the fallen teacher there. There were neither pains nor any visible wounds.

But he certainly felt that the light didn't only glow but took form and clashed into him.

-Wha-what was that, just now?

He was bewildered by the light that had vanished without any sound, but this time he heard a laughter that ringed his ears.

"Hihiji, so the possessor this time is you huh? Yes, yes, what a mediocre person to be selected."

Noticing where that voice was coming from, Heath turned bloodless.

"Oh dear, I be hurt if you make such a gloomy face. Even though I am like this, I have a rather delicate heart you know."

It was the gatekeepers head.

Even though the body was blasted away without a trace, the head still moved as if it was alive.

"But, this too is fate. And to make that fate more entertaining is my duty."

While experiencing a feeling of nausea, Heath stepped near the head.

Due to all that happening in succession, even his normal thought process might have been paralyzed.

"Just, just what in the world are you?"

"Hmm? You seem surprisingly calm. You ask who I am? I am calling myself 'Clown'"

A clown, the girl last night and the ghost in front of him, claiming they were the same thing was unpleasant.

"Was this you're doing? Why... why are you doing all this?!"

"I have done nothing. But, this person who desires the <Engraved Blade>... Oops! He doesn't have any remains to indicate to- In anycase, I only taught this person where the possessor of an <Engraved Blade> would show up."

After saying that, he once again started a creepy laughter.

"Oh, there was one other thing. I gave another chance to the corpse in return of lending me the head, but this was another unexpected end."

The living head the pointed towards Heath's right arm with its eyeballs.

"As for Gillette, he lived for three month. Well, I wonder how many days you will survive?"

"Survive?...What are you talking about?"

"Oh my! You still haven't realized it yet? Then please, take a look at your right hand."

Though he didn't have any intention of obeying the living head, Heath reflexively turned his sight towards his hand.

"This is.!?"

"Hihih- That <Engraved Blade> is you possession from now on. Use it, it is up to you whether you want to use it for wealth and fame, you are free to give it up to someone else too. Remember, for as long as the <Engraved Blade> is in your hands, many people summon you, and furthermore, many people will target you."

Heath raised a voiced that seemed to be yelling.

"I-I have no need for such a thing! You take it."

"Hmm, It is a matter of great sorrow that, that cannot be realized. I myself am something like a heat haze. I do not have a vessel in order to take up a <Kenkoku>."

Saying that, the living head started laughing weirdly.

"Well, if you are so reluctant about waiting that why not hand it over to someone else? Someone who wants it tries to get it even if the other party is killed...Now then, it's about time we end our talk."

As he said that, footsteps could be heard from the corridor.

"Then, I will be watching you from the shadows. Till the time you fall."

"H-Hey wait! Hand it over? But how-"

But he couldn't finish his sentence.

"It's a murder! Someone was killed!"

After yelling that, the living head turned into a corpse.

In that moment, the footsteps turned into a sprinting sound.

Heath then finally realized the situation in the medical office. There was a knight and a teacher who were killed. And only he was alive. On top of that, he was possessing an <Engraved Blade>.

-I have to escape.

He did not know what people would think he was seen with the <Engraved Blade> on his right hand.

Besides, he would be treated as the criminal because of that living head.

Heath did not take even one look around when he leaped through the window and ran away outside the academy.

Chapter 2 - The Spear of Calamity Drives the Capricorn

Chapter 2 - The Spear of Calamity Drives the Capricorn[edit]

Part 1[edit]

“Okay~ please vacate the place for a moment!”

After saying that, Estelle extended her hands and pushed away the pedestrians while built up the location. Normally anyone would get annoyed if they were forcibly driven away but seeing the girl’s innocence, all they could do is revealing a bitter smile.

Estelle’s make-up was thin compared to a normal Clown. It was painted quiet elegantly excluding the star on her cheek. Therefore the edging on her well featured face seemed indecent. But the make-up was probably done with that in mind.

After taking a glance at the clown girl, Mana started to display the commodities on the tables that were put together impromptu in a cross-like position.

After she finished lining them up from one end to the other, Estelle whispered to her in a small voice.

(Is there anything like a knife among the goods?) (Well there is but...)

(Put it up, I want to borrow it later.)

Though she tilted her head, Mana lined up a few knives engraved with <Omen> as she was told. Before long, they cleared up enough space for a proper performance, and Estelle then suddenly turned around.

Walking a little distance along this road, a big plaza could be seen. There were various bands playing rhythmical music and unnamed Clowns were also showing theirs performances. So the pedestrians heartlessly left, showing no interest.

Even so, Estelle gallantly started her performance.

Though it was a common act, it was increasing the number of balls inserted between her fingers.

"-Eh? There's no fun increasing the number one by one? Okay, then watch me amass them in doubles!"

Even though no one complained, the girl said that while taking out the balls.

"First of all 'two'---"

One ball materialized in each of her hands. Mana saw the balls concealed by Estelle's palms from behind. But they were cleverly hidden from the eyes of the spectators.

-She will increase the numbers like that.

But, that method was okay until the fourth ball, but what will she do after that? Amassing them in doubles meant that she would bring the number up to 'Eight'.

As Estelle brought up the number to four, she lightly clasped her hands. The balls placed between her fingers rolled between the next fingers, and moved their positions. An eggshell like hemisphere shaped object was now placed in the original position.

-Ah! Half of it is fake!

There are now eight balls between Estelle's fingers like she said before, but half of them were fake empty containers shaped like bowls.

After witnessing that trick, Mana became astonished.

---Nobody noticed it?

Even though they were grandly shown a fake trick, the audience made comments like, "Well done", "Bravo".

Even Mana herself who was just shown the technique, could never have guessed how this trick was done before.

Even though there was a risk of being seen through if the angle varied even a little, the clown magnificently kept doing her performances without faltering even a bit.

As Estelle kept announcing with her confident voice, the number of guests who stopped their tracks also began to increase.

"Now then, watch me double this again– and increase them to sixteen!"

As expected, the audience also made a stir. The girl's fingers were certainly long but it would take all her might just to place another ball between them. Just how was she planning to place them there?

—Even if its trickery, she shouldn't have any more...

Was she going to increase the numbers from the dummies that already became empty?

Before they were aware of it, not only Mana but the other spectators also held their breath and kept on watching. Estelle, who received the glances took a deep breath.

And as planned before, she nimbly waved both her hands.

“—Ha!”

‘Boroboroboro’- With an empty yell, innumerable balls were scattered between the passage.

“Aaaaaah! So-someone catch them, Hmm?”

As Estelle went into a panic and started to collect the balls, she tripped on one of them and fell over in a flashy manner.

The audience rapidly got excited.

After she fell, a great number of balls started rolling from below her. This act was probably a calculated mistake. Nodding, Mana together with the audience started laughing in unison.

Seeing a scene like that, the passer-by's who previously showed no interest started to gather.

Estelle, who was acting flustered, picked up the balls that fell down, but from the place she picked the balls up, new balls started to appear one after another.

After that, she was completely worn out.

...Indefinitely.

Tirelessly.

Without any limits.

As if it was inexhaustible amount.

" Wha-, there's way too much!"

Mana shouted as expected.

The number of balls Estelle scattered was not in 10s or 20s. Did she really plan to increase the number to this extent? Everyone including the pedestrians started to gather the balls but it seemed almost impossible to gather them all.

-Just where was she hiding that many...

Probably most of the people gathered there were wondering about that question.